SEAS POLICY AND PROCEDURE # 2013.1

Title: Policy for the Election of Endowed Chairs

Contact office
Office of the Dean
School of Engineering and Applied Science
PO Box 400246
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA 22904-4246
p. 434.924.3593
f. 434.924.3555
email. engrdean@virginia.edu

Applies to
Endowed chairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science.

Reason for policy
This policy outlines the procedure for the nomination and election of endowed chairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science to ensure that candidates fully meet the criteria as established by the University of Virginia.

Policy Statement
(1) Introduction. Holders of endowed chairs are recognized professors of international stature who have demonstrated the highest levels of excellence in their fields. It is the most prestigious honor that can be bestowed upon a University of Virginia faculty member. In addition, individuals appointed to these positions are expected to enhance the quality of the University’s academic programs through their continued contributions to teaching, research, and service; thereby serving as an example for the faculty-at-large. Endowed chair positions also serve as excellent instruments for recruiting exceptional outside faculty candidates.

The guidelines for a chaired professor require that the candidate meets the criteria for full professorship outlined in the SEAS Promotion and Tenure Guidelines. In addition, candidates for endowed chairs must have significant achievements and outstanding qualities in the following areas:

1. International stature,
2. Demonstration of the highest level of excellence and recognition in their field,
3. National and international awards,
4. Invited lectures such as keynotes, distinguished lectureships, and
5. Recognition by peer chair holders at other leading institutions. Significant accomplishments in the following areas should also be considered:
1. Leadership in national professional societies,
2. Policy advice to government,
3. Innovative contributions to professional practice, and
4. Seminal accomplishments in new and emerging technologies.

(2) **SEAS Review Process.** The Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science will annually appoint a committee of no less than six SEAS faculty members holding endowed chairs to consider any appointment to open endowed chairs. In addition, the dean will designate one member of this Endowed Chair Advisory Committee as its chair. Annually, the dean will evaluate the status of open endowed chair positions and decide whether to call for internal nominations. Following an affirmative decision, an announcement requesting internal nominations will be made to department chairs and all endowed chair holders. This committee will also evaluate potential hires and their suitability for an endowed chair professorship.

(3) **Departmental Process.** A departmental committee appointed by the department chair consisting of at least three endowed chair holders (not necessarily all from the same department) will review the nominations and submit a recommendation to the department chair. Upon completion of the internal review process, the department chairs will forward all internal nominations to the dean.

(4) **Endowed Chair Advisory Committee Process.** The Endowed Chair Advisory Committee will review all nominations provided by the department chairs. At the onset of a deliberation on a particular nomination, any committee member who has a perceived or real conflict of interest must recuse himself or herself from the deliberations. Perceived or real conflicts of interest with a candidate include close collaboration in research or teaching, current and pending joint proposals, or any strong interaction that might taint the committee member’s ability to render a disinterested assessment of the candidate. The committee may solicit additional information on any nomination but only from the nominator and the individuals who were listed as willing to provide letters of support. Typically, outside letters of support are requested on nominations that the committee considers appropriate to be forwarded to the dean. Upon completion of the review process, the chair will forward the nomination(s) to the dean.

(5) **Dean’s Responsibility.** The dean will review the information from the nominators and from the Advisory Committee. Once the dean selects the final
list of appropriate candidates, given the availability of open chair positions, the complete package is forwarded to the provost. The package will include:

1) Nomination letter,
2) Letter of recommendation from the department chair if appropriate,
3) Letter of recommendation from the dean,
4) Report from SEAS Endowed Chair Advisory Committee,
5) Outside letters of support with short bios of letter writer, and
6) CV

Once the provost approves, the nomination will go to the Board of Visitors for approval.